

# SECOND ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

2

# TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEY

OF

# LOUISIANA.

---

BY COLONEL SAMUEL H. LOCKETT,

*Professor of Engineering, Louisiana State University.*

---

NEW ORLEANS:

PRINTED AT THE OFFICE OF THE REPUBLICAN, 94 CAMP STREET.

1871.

Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2017 with funding from

This project is made possible by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services as administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Education through the Office of Commonwealth Libraries

## SECOND ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

## TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEY OF LOUISIANA, 1870.

---

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY,

Baton Rouge, December 27.

Colonel D. F. Boyd, Superintendent Louisiana State University :

SIR—I beg leave to submit the following report of my operations during the past year in the further prosecution of the topographical survey of the State of Louisiana, as required by law. My first report (of 1869) contained a description of the parishes of Rapides, Catahoula, Caldwell, Jackson, Ouachita, Richland, Morehouse, East Baton Rouge, Livingston, and East Feliciana, with a sketch of Dr. Hopkins' observations in his geological tour through St. Landry, Calcasieu, Natchitoches, Winn and Grant. The following will embrace the parishes of West Baton Rouge, Pointe Coupée, Iberville, Ascension (west of the Mississippi), Assumption, Lafourche, Terrebonne, St. Mary, St. Martin, Iberia, Lafayette, Vermilion, St. Landry, Calcasieu, the western part of Rapides, Sabine, De Soto, Caddo, Bossier, Claiborne and Union, with the northern parts of Jackson and Ouachita.

As I have as yet time to examine but little more than half of the State, I shall retain the preliminary form of my first report, and make this, like its predecessor, a simple record of labor performed, in preference to attempting a premature embodiment in a permanent shape of the incomplete information now in my possession. I will describe the parishes above named in the order in which they are mentioned, as they were visited by me in that order during my reconnoissance.

### PARISH OF WEST BATON ROUGE.

A general view of this parish might almost be given in one short sentence: "Excellent alluvial lands, intersected by bayous and tangled swamps." The parish fronts on the Mississippi river, has a

coast of about forty miles in length for its eastern boundary, and is inclosed on the north, west and south by the parishes of Pointe Coupée and Iberville. It is one of the smallest parishes of the State, and has no town or even village of any importance within its limits. Its courthouse is almost an isolated building, buried in a grove of stately pecan trees, and surrounded by large plantations. The main body of its available and improved lands lies along the shore of the great river, and in beauty, fertility and value, is unsurpassable. All who travel on the Mississippi must admire the handsome plantation dwellings, the immense sugar houses, the neatly arranged whitewashed negro quarters, the broad, well improved fields of sugar cane, and be struck with the general appearance of wealth and prosperity of the *coast* of West Baton Rouge. The depth of this coast belt is from one and a half to two and a half sections. Then begin the swamp lands, which make up much the larger part of the parish, and extend almost uninterruptedly to the western boundary. Within this back country are several bayous, of which the most important are Bayou Poydras, the two forks of Stumpy Bayou, Bayou Clause and Choctaw Bayou, with its numerous small tributaries. Bayou Poydras, Bayou Clause and Lake Clause have fine lands and some handsome plantations on their borders; the other bayous are in general unsettled.

Much of the coast country was considerably injured during the late war, as is attested by the numerous ruins of sugar houses and dwelling places. The whole parish suffered greatly from the successive overflows of the last years of the war, and several subsequent ones, and the effects of these repeated disasters are still visible in the deep marshes and dense thickets of cotton wood and briers through the once flourishing plantations; also in the fenceless condition of many broad fields, and in the unserviceable and obstructed state of all the roads running into the interior. In fact, the Grosse Tête Railroad, which runs from the courthouse to Rosedale, is the only line of communication, directly across the parish, between its eastern and western portions.

The forest growth is that usually characteristic of the Mississippi bottoms, namely: water oaks, white oaks, chestnuts, (overcup) oaks, willow oaks, pin oaks, sweet gums, black gums, sycamores, cotton wood, honey locusts, sassafras, pecans, ashes, etc.; on the higher lands with cypress, sweet and tupelo gums, and willows in the swamps.

Very extensive and dense cane brakes also exist in the interior of the parish, where the wild cat, bear and panther may still be found.

The staple productions are cotton, corn and sugar, the last being the most important. The area of improved lands is 32,000 acres, of which a large portion is now lying idle. The population of the parish is five thousand five hundred and ninety inhabitants.

The population is given as determined by the census of 1870; the area of cultivated lands is taken from the statistics of 1860, for this and all the following parishes.

#### PARISH OF POINTE COUPEE.

This parish is bounded on the east, north and west by important water courses, and on the south by the parishes of Iberville and West Baton Rouge. On the east, the Mississippi gives a coast line of forty-five miles in length; on the west, the Atchafalaya about the same, and on the north, Old River is the boundary line for six miles. Containing also within its limits the old Raceourci Bend and False river, Lake Moreau, and a large number of bayous, on all of which fertile lands and extensive plantations are found; it ranks among the wealthiest and most important parishes of the State. The Mississippi coasts present no features so different from those already described as characteristic of the coast of Baton Rouge as to merit an especial mention, except, perhaps, the Grand and Morganza levees, which are the highest and most expensive of the State. These levees vary from fifteen to eighteen feet in height, are proportionately thick, and are of vast importance to the interests of the State, as they protect from overflow thirteen of its most productive parishes. They are both now in good condition. The beautiful lands lying along the lakes and old rivers do possess, however, many peculiar charms. Bordering upon sheets of water as broad as the parent stream, they enjoy most of the advantages of the river plantations, and are free from many of their drawbacks. Here, instead of an irregular, eaving, ever-changing bank, we find permanent, gentle slopes, turfed to the water's edge; instead of dense thickets of cottonwood saplings, on boggy battures, the coast is shaded by stately groves of oaks, sycamores and gums, the undisturbed growth of centuries. There, instead of the turbulent, muddy waters of the Mississippi, majestic, it is true, in its eternal and resistless rush, we see quiet, smooth, transparent expanses, reflecting, like a mirror, the



lovely scenery around them; while good roads, handsomely improved dwelling places, neat villages of negro cabins, large sugar houses, with their towering white chimneys, an unbroken stretch of cultivated fields of indefinite length, and extending back two, three or more miles, to the blue line of woods, all together make up a panorama whose equal is seldom seen.

Besides these highly favored regions, Pointe Coupée contains many other tracts of very fine arable lands; as, for example, the belt along the Atchafalaya, from one to two sections in depth; the lands along Bayous Moreau, Conteau, Letsworth, Latanaeche, Cow Head Bayou, Fisher's Bayou, and especially those on either side of Bayou Fardoche.

Between these different bayous, as well as between them and the main streams, as is usual in the Mississippi bottoms, the lands are low and swampy; but the area so covered in Pointe Coupée is proportionately less than in West Baton Rouge.

South of Grand Levee, the plantations have been much injured by the repeated overflows, and many of them are lying idle and deserted. The high water mark, still distinctly visible along the lines of forest, and high up on the tenantless houses, is a silent witness of the terrors of those mighty floods that poured over the parishes. It is not difficult to imagine the suffering and devastation wrought by those overflows, as one rides along the lonesome highway, and traces that tell-tale mark all around him, and above the level of his own head. As before mentioned, the levees are now thoroughly repaired, and it is to be hoped that those who have been compelled to abandon these fertile lands and still habitable homes, will return and retrieve their fortunes. The industrious immigrant might, also, here find ample field for investment, with every prospect of success.

Pointe Coupée contains about 83,000 acres of open lands. The staple crop and forest growth are the same as have already been described in connection with the parish of West Baton Rouge. The population, by the last census, is 12,952.

#### PARISH OF IBERVILLE.

This parish is bounded on the north by the parishes of Pointe Coupée and West Baton Rouge; has a coast line on the Mississippi river of twenty-five miles in length for its eastern boundary; is

bounded on the south by the parishes of Ascension and Assumption, and on the west by the parish of St. Martin, with the upper Grand river and its numerous lakes forming part of the dividing lines.

Beginning with the northern portion of the parish, we find unsurpassed improved lands lying along Bayous Grosse Tête, Maringouin, and Deglaize, and, following the meanderings of these streams, with an average depth of from one-half to one and a half sections on each side. The lands west of the Grosse Tête are protected by a local levee, and are pretty generally under cultivation; east of that bayou the plantations are not so protected, and are nearly all lying idle. Between the Grosse Tête and Maringouin a swamp takes its rise in the large Woolfolk estate and gradually widens as the two bayous diverge from each other, until it occupies the whole space between them, just north of the upper Grand river. A similar swamp, between the Maringouin and Deglaize, extends from the northern boundary of the parish to Lake Oskibe (Whiskey Bay). Along lower Grand river and its tributaries, Bayou Pigeon and Bayou Sorrel, the lands have been partially cleared, and are of fine quality; but the settlers have very generally been driven off by the floods. Bayou Plaquemine, connecting Grand river with the Mississippi, is a large navigable stream, and is thickly settled along both of its banks, rather more so on the southern than the northern. The courthouse town, Plaquemine, occupies an area of one square mile, and is quite a flourishing business place, doing a large shipping trade in agricultural produce and lumber.

The coast of Iberville parish is, if possible, superior to any north of it in the extent and highly improved condition of its plantations. Many very handsome residences, surrounded by level parks and groves of pecan and live oak trees, are seen in a day's ride along the coast. Cleared lands lie along Bayou Goula and Manufactory Bayou, extending back almost to Lake Natchez, by which they are thoroughly drained. The total area of improved lands is about sixty-two thousand five hundred acres, a great deal of even the best of which is lying waste, indicating a lamentable want of labor. The crops are mixed, cotton, corn, and sugar cane, the latter largely predominating in the southern part of the parish. Forest growth as already described above. Population twelve thousand three hundred and fifty-nine.

## PARISH OF ASCENSION.

(West of the Mississippi.)

So much of Ascension parish as lies west of the Mississippi river came within the limit of my last year's reconnoissance. It is but a continuation of the coast of Iberville parish and similar to it in every respect. This parish is however more thoroughly a sugar growing country than any of those already noticed. Immediately north of the Bayou Lafourche are situated the Faubourg Laboucanne and the village Port Barrow. These settlements extend for two miles along the Mississippi, and are divided into a number of small lots apparently with the expectation of thereby forming a city of considerable size. This expectation seems to be thus far unrealized. South of the Lafourche is Donaldsonville, the courthouse town of Ascension, which is quite a handsome village of some two thousand inhabitants, showing signs of enterprise and improvement. The greater part of Ascension lies on the east of the Mississippi, between it and Lake Maurepas. It is like the western portion, of purely alluvial region, but not having as yet examined it in person, I can give no detailed description of it. It will receive full attention in a subsequent report.

## PARISH OF ASSUMPTION.

This parish is bounded on the north by Iberville and Ascension, on the east by St. James and Lafourche, on the south principally by Terrebonne, and on the west by St. Mary and Iberia.

If I were writing this report for Louisianians only, I might liken this parish and a half dozen others yet to be noticed, to those already described, and say it is similar to them in the general configuration of its surface, equal to them in beauty and fertility, inhabited, like them, by wealthy, intelligent, and hospitable planters, whose extensive domains almost weary the eye by their monotonous excellence—and say no more about it. But many may not know, that though not bordering on the Mississippi river, it is a rich alluvial parish throughout its entire extent. The greater part of its open and improved lands lies along the Bayou Lafourche, which runs through the eastern part of the parish. This belt of excellent lands is about twenty miles in length within the boundaries of Assumption, and varies in depth, in each side of the Bayou, between a mile and a mile and a half. It is closely settled throughout its



entire length, and presents the appearance of a continuous town with many very handsome residences and plantation buildings. The little villages of Paincourtville and Platonville, on the eastern bank of the Lafourche, and Napoleonville and Labadieville, on the western, are all thriving looking places, and show by their fine churches and well built public and private buildings the wealth and taste of their citizens. The Bayou Lafourche is a fine, navigable stream, deep enough and broad enough for the largest boats in ordinary high water, and at all times for those of lighter draught.

In addition to this continuous tract of open land, there are to the eastward and westward of the Lafourche, detached bodies, cleared and settled, called *brulées*. Of these, the principal are the Sacramento, Grand Bayou, Pierpart, St. Vincent, Big and Little Texas and Labadie Brulées, on the west, and the brulées of Bayou Verret and Sec, on the east. These brulées vary from four to ten miles in distance from the main bayou lands, and are not inferior to them in fertility.

The banks of the Attakapas Canal, which connect the Lafourche, at Napoleonville, with the southern part of Lake Verret, are also settled and under cultivation. So is the western shore of Lake Verret, where are found some extensive and well improved farms. The eastern shore of this lake contains a few scattered settlements whose inhabitants are engaged in fishing, hunting and lumber getting. The remaining portions of the parish, not specially mentioned above, are wooded, and mostly swampy.

The population of Assumption is 13,247; the area of improved lands 37,886 acres; the crops are corn and sugar cane, cotton to a small extent.

#### PARISH OF LAFOURCHE.

This is a long, narrow parish, lying on both sides of the bayou from which it takes its name. In extent, from northwest to northeast, it is between eighty and eighty-five miles, while it is never over twenty miles in breadth. It is bounded on the north and east by the parishes of St. James, St. John the Baptist, St. Charles and Jefferson, from which it is separated by the waters of Lac des Allemands, the bayou of the same name, Lake Ouachas, or Salvador, Bayou Pero and St. Denis and Barataria Bay. On the south and west the parish is bounded by the Gulf of Mexico and the parish of Terrebonne, and on the west partly by the parish of Assumption.

The topographical features of Lafourche, especially in the northern part of the parish, are very similiar to those just described in connection with the parish of Assumption.

The rich belt of sugar land continues to follow the course of Bayou Lafourche, and is in a high state of cultivation to within twenty-five miles of the gulf coast. After passing Thibodeaux, the depth of the high lands gradually diminish, and towards the lower parts of the parish the sea marsh encroaches to within a few hundred yards of the banks of the bayou. For several miles below any plantations the high ridge along the bayou is covered with a dense growth of live oaks. These are gradually crowded out by the rank grass of the sea marsh, and for the last twelve or fifteen miles of its course the Lafourche meanders through an unbroken expanse of wet prairies subject to tidal overflow.

Narrow belts of arable lands, are also found along Bayous Checby and Chattamahan in the northern part of the parish, and along the borders of Lac des Allemands, Lake Bœuf and its outlet of the same name. Bayou de la Vacherie, Bayou Coquille and Middle Bayou, near the centre of the parish, have some extensive and very fine tracts of improved lands upon their borders. Along Bayou des Allemands and Lake Salvador only a few scattered localities exist high enough to be inhabited. Along Bayou Blue and some of the smaller bayous of the western part of the parish, ridges of live oak lands are found, and isolated tracts of a similar nature are seen at intervals in the open low prairies. Very much the largest part of this parish, however, is the low, level, grass covered plain so characteristic of the gulf coast of this State. In the northern part of the parish this area presents some diversity in its appearance, being intersected with cypress and palmetto swamps. Also, in the vicinity of the numerous lakes of the parish exist immense tracts called trembling prairies. These seem to be a surface composed of the matted roots and decayed stalks of the marsh vegetation, floating upon water in some instances, and upon very soft mud in others. Over these prairies it is practicable to walk, and cattle graze upon them, although they vibrate at every tread, and a cut of a few feet in depth will always discover a substratum of water. As we proceed further south these prairies give place to the monotonous salt marsh, which extends to the waters of the Gulf of Mexico.

This marsh is intricately cut up by bayous, inlets and bays, and presents a ragged edge to the gulf composed of a great number of islands, peninsulas and indentations.

The courthouse town, Thibodeaux, is a very flourishing village on Bayou Lafourche, doing a large business for its size. Its stores and public buildings are large and handsome, and the private residences neat and well improved. An active and extensive foundry is one of the evidences of the energy and enterprise of its citizens. The crops of Lafourche are sugar, corn and rice. Oranges, bananas and figs are produced in large quantities. The area of improved lands is 40,000 acres, the population 14,757.

#### PARISH OF TERREBONNE.

The parish of Terrebonne is bounded on the north by the parishes of Assumption, St. Mary and Lafourche; on the east by Lafourche; on the south by the Gulf of Mexico, and on the west by the Atchafalaya Bay and St. Mary parish. In total area it is one of the largest parishes of the State, but it contains within its limits a vast extent of salt marsh, open wet prairies and trembling prairies. It has running through it from north to south a considerable number of bayous, among which the most important are Bayou Bleu, Terrebonne Bayou, Bayou Petit Caillou, Bayou du Chien, Bayou Grand Caillou, with its numerous lesser branches, Bayou du Large and Bayou de Cade. Running in a westerly direction are Bayous Black, Chouhoula, Tigre, L'Ours, Chene and Penchant. Within the parish are many large lakes, as Lake Long, on its eastern boundary; Lake Quitman, Lake Washa, Lake de Cade, and a great number of smaller sheets of water. On its coast are several important indentations, namely, Timbalier Bay, Terrebonne Bay, Caillou Bay and Atchafalaya Bay; and beyond there lie a chain of islands, of which the largest are Timbalier and Last Island.

All the bayous above named take their rise toward the northeastern quarter of the parish. They are at first narrow, shallow streams, frequently becoming perfectly dry in the summer and fall; but they gradually increase in depth and breadth until they become navigable to the smaller class of steamboats. In wet seasons, and during an overflow of the upper country, they become large streams, and are of great importance in affording so many outlets to the destructive

floods so often poured by the Mississippi over its bottom lands. As has already been so often noticed, along all of these bayous is a high ridge of excellent land, which slopes off from the bayou to the low swamps on either side. These lands are not so wide on the bayous of Terrebonne as on those of the parishes I have heretofore described, but they are not at all inferior in quality. The average depth of the cultivated fields fronting on Bayou Terrebonne is not more than forty acres, and in many cases it is less. Along the two Caillous, Bayou Black and Chuckahoula, the same observations will apply; while on the borders of the Bayou L'Ours the ridge of high lands frequently becomes only wide enough for the public highway that follows it. One consequence of this is that, instead of being made up of immense plantations, Terrebonne is rather a parish of small farms; but it is none the less prosperous, and flourishing, and beautiful for all that, but rather the contrary. There are exceptions, however, to this general rule, as in the vicinity of Houma and several other points, where the proximity of two or more bayous enables their respective ridges to meet and crowd out, as it were, the intervening swamp, and then we find, as elsewhere, broad fields and extensive domains under one ownership.

The tillable lands extend along the bayous to within from ten to twenty miles of the sea coast; then the ridge becomes a live oak grove for several miles further, and finally the salt marsh closes in upon the bayou. This marsh extends far up between the bayous, and assumes, as in Lafourche, the different phases of wet, dry or trembling prairie, according to surrounding circumstances.

The area of improved lands is 38,800 acres; the crops, fruits and forests are the same as those of Lafourche; the population 12,468 souls.

#### THE ATTAKAPAS COUNTRY.

The five (5) parishes lying just west of the lower Atchafalaya river and Grand Lake, namely, St. Mary, St. Martin, Iberia, Lafayette and Vermilion, constitute what is called the "Attakapas country." Its name is derived from that of a tribe of Indians, who once inhabited the same region.

Its present inhabitants claim for it the title of the "Garden of Louisiana," with what justice, let the following general description of



it determine. This description is taken mostly from the printed circular of Mr. Daniel Dennett, editor of the *Planters' Banner*.

This gentleman, long a resident of this beautiful country, thoroughly acquainted with all of its resources, fully appreciating its advantages, and desirous of seeing it as populous and as flourishing as its unrivaled fertility and beauty deserves, spent a vast amount of time and money in gathering together the material for an accurate and detailed description of it. He has kindly given me permission to make free use of the result of his labors, for which I beg to tender him my most sincere thanks.

The Attakapas country is bounded on the north by the parish of St. Landry, on the east by the waters of the Atchafalaya river—with its lakes and bays, on the south by the Gulf of Mexico, and on the west by Mermentau river, Mermentau Lake and Lake Arthur. It lies between latitudes  $29\frac{1}{2}$  and  $30\frac{1}{2}$  north, and its greatest eastern and western extension is about one hundred and ten miles.

On the southern coast are Atchafalaya, Cote Blanche and Vermilion Bays, into which empty the navigable streams Atchafalaya river, Bayou Teche and Vermilion river. Two lines of railroad, intersecting its finest portions from east to west, are now building.

The salt marsh extends along the southern coast, averaging twenty miles in depth from the waters of the Gulf. Much of this is susceptible of drainage and protection by local levees, and when so improved, will make rice lands equal to any in the world.

On the inland border of the marsh is a dividing line of cypress timber, separating the wet marshes from the higher tillable lands of the interior. This line of timber extends from a point below Berwick's Bay, on the east, far into Vermilion parish, on the west. In the vicinity of Petit Anse Island, it is interrupted for a few miles, and the prairies pass imperceptibly into the marsh. The breadth of this belt of timber is from one to two miles, and at points even more. Following its sinuosities, its total length is one hundred and twenty-five miles. North of this belt, along all the rivers and bayous, are the usual ridges of most excellent alluvial lands, those along the Teche, especially, being considered by many the best in the State. West of Bayou Teche, after the wooded lands of the bottom are passed, we enter the beautiful open prairie country, which extends



westward beyond the limits of the Attakapas country to the Calcasieu and Sabine rivers. Of this region, Professor Hilgard remarks :

“Few sections of the United States, indeed, can offer such inducements to settlers as the prairie region between the Mississippi bottoms and the Nez Pique and Mermentau. Healthier by far than the prairies of the Northwest, fanned by the sea breeze, well watered, the scarcity of wood rendered of less moment by the blandness of the climate, and the extraordinary rapidity with which natural hedges can be grown for fences, while the inexhaustibly fertile soil produces sugar cane and cotton in profusion, continuing to do so, as in many cases, after seventy years’ exhaustive culture. Well may the Teche country be styled by its enthusiastic inhabitants the ‘Garden of Louisiana.’ ”

Although timber is scarce in the prairies, the supply on the lakes and bayous is immense. Numerous plantations have an ample supply of the very best of cypress within two miles of their sugar houses. All the swamps contain inexhaustible forests of this timber of both the red and white varieties.

Mr. Dennett gives the following as a complete list of the natural trees and shrubs of the Attakapas parishes, including, also, the parish of St. Landry, which is a continuation of exactly the same kind of country:

Oaks—Red, white, live, post, black, brown, scarlet, turkey, swamp, bear, chinquapin, water, willow, overcup, Spanish, myrtle, dentata, and blackjack. Ash—White, water, green, red, two varieties of prickley ash, and two varieties of sumach. Locusts—Black, acacia, and three varieties of honey. Haw—Red, May, sugar, parsley leafed, apple, bird and black. Pine—In St. Landry, only, short leafed, yellow, pitch, and “loblolly.” Gums—Black, sweet and tupelo. Maples—Sugar, silver and swamp. Elms—Water, red and slippery. Willows—Red, white and black. Hickory—Black, shell bark, pignut and water. Pecans—Six varieties. Mulberry—White and red. Crabapple—Two varieties. Sassafras—Red and white. Persimmons—Two species. Bay—Red and sweet. Dogwood—Two species. Magnolia—Grandiflora and glauca. Also, wild chinazium, catalpa, wild peach, black walnut, cottonwood, balm of gilead, yellow poplar, beech, papaw, blackthorn, water birch, wild cherry, wild plum, redbud, holly, barberry, box elder, boxwood, sycamore,

wild sloe, hackberry, yellow wood, sorrel tree, ironwood, youpon, wax myrtle, hornbeam and buckeye. The muscadine and fox grapes flourish in the native woods, while the scuppernong and several other varieties of non-indigenous grapes are easily cultivated.

A list of the fruits, which are found in great abundance in all of these parishes, is also a long one, viz: Peaches, plums, figs, quinces, pears, cherries, papaws, the nuts and berries of the trees above mentioned, blackberries, dewberries, strawberries; while, in the southern parishes, oranges, Japan plums or mispilus, lemons, limes, bananas and pineapples are raised, without any protection, except in unusually severe seasons.

To give a list of the garden vegetables that flourish in Attakapas, would be but to take the catalogue of some establishment whose sole business it is to sell every variety of edible plant, and transcribe it from beginning to end, omitting a very few plants, whose home is far north.

An Illinois farmer says: "I find I can raise everything in Louisiana that I can raise in Illinois, and that I can raise a hundred things there which can not be raised in Illinois. I find the lands easier worked in Louisiana, infinitely richer than ours, and yielding far more; and with the finest climate on earth, and no trouble to get to market."

The editor of the *Chicago Tribune*, after a visit to the Teche country, says: "If by some supreme effort of nature Western Louisiana, with its soil, climate and productions, could be taken up and transported north to the latitudes of Illinois and Indiana, and be there set down in the pathway of Eastern and Western travel, it would create a commotion that would throw the discovery of gold in California in the shade at the time of the greatest excitement. People would rush to it in countless thousands. Every man would be intent on securing a few acres of these wonderfully productive sugar plains."

These opinions of non-residents are certainly expressed in terms of the highest praise, and yet I do most unhesitatingly affirm they do nothing more than simple justice to the Attakapas parishes. I will now take them up individually, and give a more detailed description of their topography.

## PARISH OF ST. MARY.

This is the most south-easterly of the Attakapas parishes, bounded on the north by the parish of Iberia, on the east by the waters of Grand Lake, on the south by the Atchafalaya, St. Bernard and Cote Blanche Bays, and on the west by these same bodies of water and the parish of Iberia. Beginning with the eastern portion, we find some very fine tillable lands lying along Bayou Bœuf, and Shaffer and Berwick's Bay. Much of this very excellent country is lying waste, the fields grown up in cocklebur and other weeds, roads reduced to narrow trails, plantation houses and fences in a dilapidated condition, and a general air of desertion and desolation pervading the scene. Bayous Bœuf and Shaffer are both large, deep, navigable streams. Berwick's Bay is from 1000 to 1200 yards in width, and deep enough for large sea-going steamers. Brashear City, at the head of this bay, is a small irregularly built village, having nothing worth mentioning but its handsome depot building and extensive wharves belonging to the Texas and New Orleans Railroad. The tillable lands begin on the west of the bay, at a point five miles below the town of Berwick, and thence continue uninterruptedly along the Atchafalaya and Teche beyond the limits of the parish. Fine bodies of cultivated lands are also found in Bayou Salé and Bayou Cypre-Mort throughout their entire length; those on Bayou Salé being considered the best sugar lands in the parish, while the Cypre-Mort belt is remarkable for its magnificent groves of live oaks, ashes, gums, magnolias and cypress. On the headwaters of Bayou Cypre-Mort is an open arable prairie of the same name. All the rest of the parish is the open sea marsh, subject to tidal overflow, excepting the two remarkable islands, Cote Blanche and Belle Isle, to be presently described. The elevation of the ridges of land along the bayous is about ten feet above the level of the waters of the gulf, and there is a gradual rise until at Franklin, the courthouse town, the lands on the west of Bayou Teche lie thirteen feet above tide water, and at the northern boundary of the parish an elevation of fifteen feet is reached. All the lands east of the Teche are subject to the overflows of the highest stages of water of the Mississippi, but west of the Teche, an overflow has never been known above the little town of Centreville. On the Teche the tillable lands vary in depth from one to three, and in some

cases five miles on either side of the bayou. On the other bayous the depth is much less, seldom exceeding one-half mile.

In texture and color, the Teche lands are lighter than those of the true Mississippi bayous. In many places a genuine red bank reminds one forcibly of the Red river lands, and shows that the former overflows of Bayou Teche were frequently caused by the surplus waters of that peculiarly colored and muddy stream.

On the banks of the Teche are the neat little villages of Pattersonville and Centreville, and the handsome growing town, Franklin, which seems to be the capital of all the Attakapas country.

I will not attempt to describe the beauty of the plantations, and the country generally, along the borders of the Teche in St. Mary. When I began my examination of the State of Louisiana, I thought the lands of the bayous of Rapides would stand pre-eminent for beauty, fertility and their finely improved condition. Sicily Island and Bayou De Sieard Island convinced me that it was injudicious to come to hasty conclusions. The "False" rivers of Pointe Coupée again gave my preconceived notions a severe shock, while the Lafourche and Grosse Tete and the bayous of Terrebonne unsettled my opinions more and more. I have concluded, therefore, not to say that the Teche lands are the best in the State, or the best I ever saw or expect to see, but simply that they are good enough, and if any one wishes to find a more beautiful country wherein to make his home, I do not wish to join him in his search, fearing his journey would be long and wearisome, and fruitless at the end.

There remains yet to be noticed the two most remarkable points in St. Mary parish: namely, the islands of Cote Blanche and Belle Isle. These belong to a chain of five islands, running from northwest to southeast, through the marshes of Iberia and St. Mary parishes. The most northerly is Miller's Island, on the borders of Lake Peigneur. Then come Petit Anse, Grand Cote, Cote Blanche, and last is Belle Isle. The two extreme islands are considerably smaller than the others, but similar to them in every other respect. In both a geological and topographical view, these islands are objects of very great interest. Geologically, they evidently belong to the same epoch as the bluff formation of the eastern bank of the Mississippi river. Their surface presents the same water worn appearance, being an alternation of irregular ranges of hills and sinuous valleys. We observe the same precipitous bluffs, with a capping of



yellow silicious silt, underlaid by the lower members of the bluff and the sand and pebble beds of the orange sand formation, while the exact coincidence of the forest growth with that peculiar to other bluff localities, would make a resident of Vicksburg, Port Hudson or Baton Rouge, if suddenly transported to these islands, believe that he was still in the immediate vicinity of his own home. Topographically, these islands are a continuation of the Cote Gelée, hills, running north and south through the parish of Lafayette. This same range of hills, continuing northward, receives the names Carancro hills in the northern part of Lafayette, Grand Coteau in south St. Landry, the Opelousas hills in the vicinity of the town of that name, and finally abut against the Bayou Boeuf at Washington and Moundville. Further north, I have not yet traced them, but am of the opinion that future investigations will discover connecting links between the points last named and Sicily Island in Catahoula parish, which is itself but a continuation of the hills of Bayou Maçon. This line, thus marked out by broken chains of hills and detached islands in the sea-marsh swamps, I believe to have been the western shore of a once vast estuary whose limits are coextensive with the present alluvial bottom of the Mississippi river. To account for these islands in their present positions, we have but to suppose a series of mighty crevasses through the great natural levee formed along the border of the estuary. These crevasses were made during the movement of elevation which evidently once occurred throughout the valley of the Mississippi. The city of Baton Rouge might have been situated on a similar island, had the erosion that produced the Devil's Swamp, just north of it, been continued a little further so as to meet the head of the valley of Ward's Creek. The rush of waters which would have followed such a result, in some unusually high stage of the ancient Mississippi, can easily be imagined sufficient to sweep away the country for miles back, while the circling eddies just below this hypothetical crevasse would have left unhurt the hills upon which Baton Rouge now stands. But we will return from these theoretical considerations which can hardly be called topographical, and proceed with a description of Cote Blanche Island, the principal one in St. Mary parish. I can not do better than to take that already published by Mr. Dennett:



"This island is about ten miles from Franklin by water, and twenty miles by the buggy road, via Cypre-Mort and across the marsh. Cote Blanche rises up, an island mountain, out of the marsh by the Gulf of Mexico. Its highest elevation is one hundred and eighty feet above the level of the Gulf; it has hills and dales, valleys and plains, lakes and springs, a rich soil, and a climate in which it is hard to get sick or die; the pure sea breezes from the Gulf fan and cool its surface during the summer and autumn months, and temper the winds of winter. On the south side, next to the Gulf, is a bold precipice, a hundred feet high, whose base is washed by the salt waves. Here is fine bathing when the tide flows in; the beach is firm and smooth, and the bottom gradually deepens, so that bathers may wade out a hundred yards.

"On the bluff behind the precipice, overlooking the Gulf, the surface is gently rolling. It is firm, smooth and sandy—a fine site for a village of pleasure-seekers—and such sleeping and bathing as may here go almost hand to hand few have ever enjoyed.

"This island, at some future day, may be made one of the most beautiful spots on the face of the earth. Here sugar cane, sea island cotton, tobacco, rice, corn, sweet and Irish potatoes grow in the greatest luxuriance. And grass abounds where the plow or shade trees do not oppose it. And when we come to the fruit, what may we not say of it. This island of two thousand acres may, one day, become almost one unbroken vinyard, and the best wines and brandies may be exported from it. Here olives, oranges, lemons, bananas, citrons, limes, and many other tropical fruits may be made to bring large revenues to the island. The mespilus, peaches, figs, plums, dewberries, blackberries, strawberries—all do well in this favored spot. And here melons and garden vegetables grow and thrive as they seldom thrive anywhere.

"In addition to all its other merits, it affords the finest pastures for cattle and horses, and a fine range for hogs and domestic fowls. In the waters in front, and the bayous around the island, the supply of fine fishes is inexhaustible, and oyster reefs in abundance; deer, geese, ducks and brant are at the service of epicures and hunters. The broad sheet of marsh around this island furnishes the best of winter range for cattle. Thousands could find ample support, as they do in the marsh in other portions of the Gulf coast. After the first frosts of winter appear, the immense sheet of stubble is burnt

off, and an abundant growth of young grass continues to spring up during the winter and spring. The most of the surface of this marsh is firm enough to bear up horned cattle, as they rove over it for food when the grass on the prairies is dead."

Belle Isle, though smaller than Cote Blanche, is similar to it in every essential particular. As its name implies, it is a beautiful island, in the salt sea marsh, with every variety of soil, scenery, productions and surrounding circumstances requisite to make a most delightful residence.

The population of St. Mary parish is 13,980. The area of improved lands by the census of 1860 was 78,389 acres, but this is probably much greater than the area now under cultivation in the parish. The parish of Iberia now contains what was once an important and highly improved part of St. Mary, and much of the once cleared and cultivated fields is relapsing into a wilderness.

#### PARISH OF IBERIA.

This is one of the newly created parishes. It was formed mostly from the northern part of St. Mary and the southern part of St. Martin. It is therefore bounded on the south and north by these parishes, on the east it is bounded by Assumption, and on the west by Vermilion. Lafayette bounds a few miles of its northeastern corner. The waters of Grand Lake divide the parish into two unequal parts, the smaller division lying to the eastward of the lake, The latter is almost one continuous swamp and cypress brakes, with numerous bayous running through it; on the western border of Grand Lake the same dense cypress swamp is again found. As we go further from the lake this changes to a forest of oaks, gums, ashes and other timber, which, in its turn, gives place to the open cultivated lands lying along the east bank of the Teche. Crossing the Teche, we find the open lands as before following the windings of the stream through the whole parish. This belt of land at the southern boundary of the parish is about two miles in width and widens as we proceed northward until at the Fausse Pointe bend we find it from three to five miles in breadth. Continuing still westward from the Teche, we come to the level, untimbered prairie, lying in an unbroken body between Lake Tasse and Lake Peigneur on the north and between the Teche and the salt marsh of Vermilion Bay on the south. The marsh follows somewhat the shape of Vermilion Bay,

keeping about an average depth of from eight to ten miles, and encloses the bluff islands of Grand Cote and Petit Anse. On the southern shore of Lake Peigneur is the smaller island, known sometimes as Miller's and sometimes as Orange Island.

The belt of land along the Teche is exactly similar in kind, quality and appearance to that already noticed in the description of St. Mary. The bayou itself, though still navigable, even beyond the limits of Iberia, becomes, however, narrower, and with its heavy fringe of live oaks, willows and cypress, bending over its waters, and appearing almost to meet, at some points, it is more picturesque and beautiful. The prairie region is all capable of cultivation, but requires artificial drainage, as it is so nearly a perfect level that the surface water, after a rain, seems unable to determine in what direction to flow.

The quality of the soil of the prairies, though inferior to that of the true bayou lands, is good, and quite a number of flourishing farms give variety and an appearance of prosperity to the scene. As much of the prairie, probably nine-tenths of it, is still untenanted, and as it can undoubtedly be made a perfect garden spot with less labor than that required to clear wooded land, it struck me as being a very eligible site for the formation of an immigrant colony.

In giving a description of those objects of special interest in Iberia, namely, Grand Cote, Petit Anse and Miller's Islands, I will avail myself again of Mr. Dennett's labors, and transcribe literally such parts of his printed circular as properly belong to the objects of this report: "The Island of Grand Cote, now the property of Mr. Weeks, is somewhat larger than Cote Blanche Island, being two miles in diameter, and nearly round. As much as we have heard of the beauty of this island, it is far more beautiful than we supposed it to be. On one of the bluffs of the island, we had a fine view of outspread fields of cotton and corn, just in their glory—ravines, valleys, hillsides, and level plains, timber and open lands, canebrakes and pastures. In one direction is a bold elevation, covered with a heavy growth of timber, and hillsides steep as the mountains of Scotland; in another direction, away down below us, between steep elevations, a pure, fresh water lake is spread out, with water lilies upon its surface, the branches of beautiful forest trees extending far out over the surface, it needed but a few white swans to complete the picture, and make it perfectly enchanting.

"Leaving this delightful place, we plunged into the thicket between the rugged hillside and the lake, traveling in a road over which the wild cane hung so low as to make us bow to the pommels of our saddles, to save our hats, twenty or more times in half that number of minutes. Emerging into a valley between hills which formed a great basin, we came to a fine field of short staple cotton, like that we had seen before, clean, rank and well bolled. Coming out of this valley, we mounted to higher regions, and proceeded towards the dwelling house and gardens. On our way, to our right, we noticed another fresh water lake, having an area of about an acre.

"The dwelling house is on a handsome bluff, of regular shape, about a hundred and fifty feet above the level of the Gulf. Beautiful shade trees and the sea breeze keep the yard and the house cool, even in the hottest summer days. The yard all around is well set in Bermuda grass. In front the sea marsh extends out a hundred yards, and beyond this the waters of the Gulf spread out under a blazing sun. To the right is a bayou twenty feet deep, with five feet of water on the bar to its mouth; any of our bayou steamers can run up to the landing a hundred yards from the dwelling house. Red-fish and many other fine fishes are found in abundance in this bayou. The waters in front abound with fine fishes, which, in the proper season, are taken in great abundance in the seine. There are oyster reefs not far off.

"In the garden we found a splendid arbor of scuppernong grape vines, about thirty feet square; the roof about nine feet high; the vines flowing down to the ground on all sides, making a complete room with vegetable walls and ceiling. The vines on all sides and above, hung full of grapes not yet ripe. These vines produce a bountiful crop of grapes every year. There is no doubt that all this chain of islands on the coast, Petit Anse, Grand Cote, Cote Blanche, and Belle Isle, are admirably adapted to grape culture, and will, at some future day, become as celebrated for their wines as the islands of any portion of Europe."

Fruits of all kinds appear to do well on all of these islands.

This island contains a surface of about two thousand acres, six hundred acres of which are timber; the balance is in pasture, or under cultivation.



At various localities, all over the island, fine, thrifty forest trees may be seen, which add much to the beauty of the scenery. The island, viewed from its highest pinnacle, is picturesque and beautiful beyond anything we have ever before seen in the State. Its gentle undulations, its peaks, hills, valleys, ponds, its towering magnolias and noble oaks, its ash and cypress, its fields of blooming cotton and waving cane—all inspire the most pleasant emotions in the breast of any beholder who loves to look on nature when she puts on her finest robes, and appears in her most bewitching mood.

The next island, going northward, is justly the most noted of them all. This is called "Salt Island," "Avery's Island," "Petit Anse Island," according to the caprice of the speaker or writer. It contains about two thousand two hundred arpents of upland, and one thousand two hundred arpents of timber—cypress, gum, magnolia, oak, etc. It is about two miles in diameter, nearly round, and is made of hills, valleys, ravines, ponds, woodlands, open fields and pastures—the whole surrounded on all sides by sea marsh, which, in the distance, has the appearance of dry, level prairie. From the sugar house we climbed a steep hill to the highest elevation on the island. On horseback our eyes were on a level of about one hundred and ninety feet above the tide water. Here we saw the Vermilion timber, and the line of timber on the Têche, apparently extending from a point below the Jeannerette neighborhood to the neighborhood above St. Martinsville. We could see Vermilion Bay, Grand Cote Island, Cypre Mort Woods, a sail, and the smoke of a Morgan steamer on the Gulf. The lighthouse could be seen with a glass, twenty-eight miles distant. The vast sheet of sea marsh which surrounds the island, the fine expanse of prairie back of New Iberia and the Teche, and on towards Vermilion, were all before us. Our eye swept a circumference of over a hundred and fifty miles, and a diameter of about fifty.

Could all the vast sheet of prairie and woodland, marsh and water, hill and valley, be placed on canvass by a skillful artist, it would give to the admirer of nature's charms "a world of beauty in a nut shell." But the great beauty of this island, with its expansive views, is not its most notable feature. The wonderful deposit of pure rock salt, which was discovered during the war, lying in one of its deep valleys, has given it a very just celebrity throughout the United States.



Through the kindness of Captain Kerr, of New Iberia, I became acquainted with the family of Judge Avery, the owner of Petit Anse Island, and enjoyed every facility in examining the island and the salt mines. Although it is hardly within the province of this report to notice the salt mine, more than to state it as one of the peculiar features of the island, and the most fruitful of its resources, yet I can not forbear giving a brief sketch of the impressions made by a visit to it. As before stated, it is situated near the head of a narrow valley, which opens out to the Gulf. In this valley are numerous small springs and a small stream, whose saline waters first attracted attention. Salt was made by evaporation from these waters many years ago, and the abundant remains of Indian relics everywhere found in the valley, are conclusive evidence of the aborigines having made the same use of them long before the white man ever set his foot on this island. During the late war, in boring and digging wells to get the saline waters, the pure rock salt was discovered. It was then extensively mined in an irregular manner by private parties and the Confederate and State authorities. Now, Messrs. Choteau and Price have in operation a mine constructed on scientific principles. Down the shaft of their mine I was allowed to descend to examine the interior.

The shaft is seventy feet deep, about thirty through the surface earth, and the remaining forty through the pure crystalized salt. From the bottom of this vertical shaft two horizontal galleries are excavated in opposite directions, the one two hundred and the other one hundred and fifty feet in length, making in all three hundred and fifty feet. The height of this horizontal gallery is about ten feet at the crown of its arched roof, and it is thirty feet in width. A railway for transporting the blocks of salt to the shaft runs along the axis of the gallery. On either side of the railway lie piled hundreds of tons of pure salt, in blocks varying in size from the smallest fragments to huge masses, weighing two hundred to three hundred pounds. In the far ends of the gallery the miners are still picking away with their sharp instruments, or boring deep holes for a blast, or wedging out some huge block already loosened from its bed, with their mining lamps buring on their heads. The whole gallery is lit up by these lamps, and on every side the bright facets of the pure salt glisten and sparkle like an infinitude of diamonds. The

masses of salt break out with a conchoidal fracture, causing the roof to be composed of deep cavities, with clean cut angular edges. The perfect blackness of the cavities, the extreme brilliancy of the edges which catch the light, and the wonderful intricacy of the innumerable curves made by the intersection of so many surfaces, give to all of this subterranean scene a dazzling, wierd, trembling brilliancy, that looks more like enchantment than reality.

As to the amount of this salt deposit it is at present impossible to make any estimate. A boring of some twenty feet in depth at the bottom of the shaft has not reached its vertical limit, and it has been found by surface borings at several points hundreds of yards from the present opening. It is very conveniently shipped through Petit Anse Bayou, which runs within a mile and a quarter of the mine. It is of the very best quality, containing less than one per cent. of foreign substances.

A description of Miller's or Orange Island necessarily embraces that of the lake upon which it is situated. I will give them both in the language of Mr. Dennett: "Lake Peigneur is sometimes called Lake Simonette. It is situated about nine miles west of New Iberia. The length of the lake is about three miles, its width one mile, and its greatest depth thirty-two feet. It is fed by numerous springs that break out around its margin. It is the most beautiful lake in Attakapas and in the South. It swarms with fishes, such as abound in the lakes and bayous of this country, and they can be caught in unlimited abundance at all seasons of the year. The supply can never be exhausted.

"This lake has an elevation of nine feet above the Gulf of Mexico, and is situated ten miles north of Vermilion Bay, and about six miles northwest from the salt mines of Petit Anse Island. The country around the lake is very picturesque."

Orange or Miller's Island bounds Lake Peigneur on the south. The island lies in the curve of the lake, which has the shape of a new moon. The highest part of the island is seventy-five feet above the level of the lake, and eighty-four feet above the level of the gulf. It has hills, valleys, levels and inclined plains, and from its bluff banks, in places, the branches of the trees hang out over the waters of the lake.

Orange Island is in a line with Petit Anse, Grand Cote, and Cote Blanche islands, and each is separated from the neighboring islands

by a distance of about six miles. Orange Island rises above the lake and the surrounding prairie, as the other islands rise above and overlook the surrounding sea marsh.

But a short distance off flows Petit Anse Bayou, draining the neighboring country and emptying into the Gulf two miles below the island. A constant sea breeze renders this spot healthy and pleasant as a residence.

There were formerly six thousand orange trees on this island bearing an immense crop of oranges yearly. Most of these are still in fine condition. They have been greatly improved in the last two months under the direction of Mr. Meux, who has a half interest in the island. Many of these trees have large, fine bodies, a foot in diameter, and they are more than thirty years old.

There are over two thousand young and bearing pecan trees, a large number of the better kinds of cherry, and some fig, peach, quince, mespilus, lemon, and plum trees, several avenues of live oak and other growth, and a grove of stately magnolias. Seen from the summit of the bluff, Lake Peigneur spreads out almost beneath the feet of the observer, while the gleam of its silvery surface closes the vista of the principal avenues leading from the house.

The tract contains three thousand five hundred acres of soil, rich and easy of cultivation, producing in one instance four hogsheads of sugar per acre, while the cornfield is said to have yielded more than fifty bushels to the same amount of land. About four hundred and fifty acres from a natural rice field, easily flooded from the lake or drained from the rear bayou. The extensive drains are laid off with the regularity of a chess board, with broad elevated roads between. The pasture lands have supported over four thousand head of improved breeds of stock. The marsh range and an abundance of large clams upon the lake shore furnish all that is required for keeping an extensive stock of hogs.

The co-owner of this property is Mr. Joseph Jefferson, a most genial gentleman and keen sportsman, whose renown as one of the brightest luminaries of the stage is world-wide. Mr. Jefferson contemplates spending from his ample fortune a large sum of money in the improvement of his place. This he can well afford, as his talents bring him an income of over one hundred thousand dollars a year, and his property it is said, amounts to a million.

With proper taste and judgment, few places are susceptible of

higher improvement in point of beauty or profit. The value of the orchard may be only partially understood by its yield of 500,000 oranges the past season, after a neglect of two years. These readily sell at a dollar a hundred on the ground, the fruit gathered by the buyer. The beauty of the bold banks and knolls presented to the lake shore on the north, or the natural lawns gently sloping to the south for miles, form scenic beauties attractive to poet or painter. A visit to this beautiful spot is necessary to its appreciation.

The population of Iberia is 8931. Its products and forest growth have already been mentioned in the general description of the Attakapas country.

#### PARISH OF ST. MARTIN.

This parish is bounded on the north by St. Landry, on the east by Iberville, with the Atchafalaya forming the boundary line, on the south by Iberia, and on the west by Lafayette. Since the creation of Iberia, it has been reduced to one of the smallest parishes of the State—its extreme length and breadth being each about twenty-four miles. The Teche runs through the parish from north to south, dividing it into two sections, of which the eastern is much the larger. On both banks of the Teche we find the same attractive characteristics already noticed. Passing this belt, the beautiful open prairie is found on either side. On the east the prairies average from three to five miles in width, and are bounded on their eastern borders by arable lands densely wooded with a growth of oaks, ash, gum, pecans, sycamore, linns, etc. As we approach the Atchafalaya the land becomes lower—too wet for cultivation, and in many cases swampy, the growth becoming mostly cypress and tupelo gums. At Butte à la Rose, on the Atchafalaya, is a small tract of land high enough for a settlement. In the extreme eastern portion of the parish are a number of lakes and bayous, all connected with the Atchafalaya. Passing from the bayou lands of the Teche westward the prairies are found to be on an average three miles in width. West of the prairies comes the wooded lands along Vermilion Bayou, which forms the western boundary line of St. Martin parish.

In the southern part of the parish these prairies are also interrupted by the woodlands along Bayou Capucin, Cypress Island and the coulée of the same name, and the wooded borders of Bayou Tortue. The prairies are not perfectly level, but gently rolling, and



intersected by many natural drains, called "coulées," which generally take their rise in ponds or "marais." In some cases these ponds assume the dimensions of lakes, and become points of considerable interest, as furnishing an unfailing supply of water to the numerous herds of cattle which feed on the prairies. One of these lakes, two miles south of the little village of Breaux Bridge, called Lake Martin, is quite a pretty sheet of water, with firm banks fringed with tall cypress and gum trees, and abounding in all the usual variety of southern fishes. It is a place of constant resort for pleasure parties from the surrounding country.

The Bayou Teche is navigable during the greater part of the year up to the town of St. Martinsville, but above this point the low water navigation ceases. The bayou becomes not more than two and a half or three feet deep, and from fifty to sixty feet in width. The banks are between twenty and twenty-five feet in height, and the bayou presents the appearance of a canal rather than a natural stream. A comparatively small amount of labor and capital would be amply sufficient to convert it into a canal, capable of bearing the smaller class of steamboats, and thus continue and render constant safe navigation beyond the limits of St. Martin. It is thought that one lock near St. Martinsville would secure this desirable result.

The courthouse town, St. Martinsville, is a pleasant village, of some eight hundred inhabitants, lying along the banks of the Teche. To Mr. S. V. Martin, of this town, and his son Cadet Robert Martin, of the State University, I beg leave to tender my thanks for kindness and valuable assistance. Breaux Bridge, near the centre of the parish, also on the Teche, is a small but thriving village of some two hundred inhabitants.

The population of this parish is nine thousand three hundred and seventy. The crops—cotton, corn and sugar cane.

#### PARISH OF LAFAYETTE.

This is the smallest of the country parishes, being about twenty miles in length from north to south, and about eighteen from east to west. It is nearly triangular in shape, with its vertex pointing northward and base to the south. It is bounded on the north and northwest by St. Landry, on the east by St. Martin parish, and on the south and southwest by Iberia and Vermilion. About one-



eighth of its area is wooded and swamp lands, and all the rest is prairie. Beginning with the eastern boundary, we find the Vermilion Bayou, with its valley, varying from one-half to one and a half miles in width, all of which is timbered, unless under cultivation or artificially cleared. North of Vermilionville, as soon as we leave the valley of the bayou, we rise a gently sloping chain of hills running north and south. These are the Carrion-crow Hills previously mentioned. From the summit of the Carrion-crow Hills westward lies the beautiful open prairie country called Beaux Basin. As soon as we strike the Carrion-crow Hills we observe at once that we have left the great bottom of the Mississippi river. The soil is a yellowish-brown, lighter and more easily worked than the true alluvial lands. The forest growth is decidedly different from that of the bayou lands. Here we see magnolias, poplars, walnut, sycamore, and the upland oaks predominating instead of the gums, cypress, willows and swamp oaks. The deep ravines on the hillsides with their precipitous orange-yellow banks and their peculiar siunosity reminds one forcibly of the country in the neighborhood of Port Hudson or Baton Rouge.

I am convinced that the Carrion-crow Hills on their eastern slopes, and for some miles or more back from their summit, belong to the bluff formation. Once back on the prairie, however, the soil and scenery are both very different. Here are no natural forests, the surface is generally undulating, the drains are shallow coulées heading in broad flat "marais," and the soil is of a lighter, more grayish complexion. A vast amount of the prairie is uninclosed and uncultivated, but being a fine pasturage it feeds a large number of horses and cattle. The scattered and widely separated farms, with their quaint looking French houses surrounded by groves of feathery China trees, add variety and picturesqueness to the scene. The yearly trimming of these China trees supplies the inhabitants with their firewood. Near the middle of the eastern boundary of Lafayette the Vermilion bayou makes a sharp turn to the west and runs diagonally through the southern half of the parish. It cuts through the range of hills near the town of Vermilionville, with a bluff bank on the north and a narrow bottom on the south. Then the Côte Gélee Hills begin and continue southward to Lake Peigneur. They are similar in general features to the Carrion-crow, but more

rolling, more open, and generally more beautiful. The soil is rich, the climate healthy, and the inhabitants seem thrifty and independent.

From the Côte Gélee Hills, the prairies extend westward to the bottom lands of Vermilion river, which are from one to two miles in width, and densely wooded when not under cultivation. Passing the Vermilion, still going westward, we come to the great Vermilion prairie, which stretches out far beyond the limits of the parish.

The town of Vermilionville is a pleasant village, one and a half miles from the river, with eight hundred inhabitants, a handsome courthouse, church, and neat, comfortable looking dwelling places. The population of Lafayette is ten thousand three hundred and eighty-nine. The crops are cotton, corn and cane. Beef cattle and horses form a large part of the wealth of the parish. The area of improved land is one hundred and eleven thousand three hundred and seventy-three (?) acres.

#### PARISH OF VERMILION.

This is a large parish in actual extent, but the following distribution of its topographical features will show that it possesses but a small area of habitable lands. It contains about one hundred square miles of timbered land, about five hundred square miles of dry prairie, and over one thousand of salt marsh, lakes and bays. It is bounded on the north by the parishes of Calcasieu, St. Landry and Lafayette; on the east by Lafayette, Iberia and Vermilion Bay; on the south by the Gulf of Mexico, and on the west by Calcasieu parish. The Vermilion river runs through its eastern portion, and the Mermentau river and Vermilion lake form its western boundary line. Nearly all the timbered and cultivated lands lie along the Vermilion river and a few of its small tributaries. A narrow belt of timbered land follows the windings of Bayou Queue de Tortue on the northern boundary, and continues along Mermentau river, lake Arthur and lake Mermentau on the west. The inner border of the sea marsh extends from the mouth of Vermilion river to the head of Mermentau lake, having a breadth of from eighteen to thirty miles. All north of this, excepting the timbered lands above noted, is prairie, and all south impassable sea marsh and lakes, excepting Pecan Island and Grand Cheniere.

The lands along the streams are of good quality, and produce fair crops. The prairie lands are more level than those of the prairies already noticed. They are susceptible of cultivation, and those who have given them a fair trial say that they are actually improved by cultivation for a number of years. By turning in the stock upon the fields every two or three years, they may be kept in fine condition for an indefinite period. All of these prairies are, however, of such excellent natural pastures their inhabitants pay but little attention to agriculture, and devote their time and energies to watching their immense herds of cattle and horses. They make no effort at improving their stock, and the cattle is not as valuable for beef as it might be, and is nearly worthless for milking purposes, while their horses are a breed of very small ponies, hardy, it is true, but too light for heavy work.

The most interesting special features of Vermilion parish are the Pecan Island and the Grand Cheniere. Both of these are long, narrow bodies of land near the waters of the Gulf, surrounded by the sea marsh, but themselves above any tidal overflow. Their soil is a rich, black loam, of inexhaustible fertility, producing cane, sea island cotton and the tropical fruits in great abundance. As their names imply, the one is covered by a dense growth of pecan trees, and the other is almost an unbroken line of oak grove. They both contain settlers, and but for the swarms of mosquitoes which infest them, would be most desirable localities of residence.

The village of Abbeville, the seat of justice of the parish, contains about four hundred inhabitants. It is situated on the banks of Vermilion river, which is navigable beyond the northern boundary of the parish. Mermentau river is also navigable up to the junction of the Nez Piqué river and Bayou Plaquemine Brulée. Lake Arthur, through which the Mermentau runs, is a beautiful sheet of water, six miles in length and one mile in average width. Lake Mermentau is a large body of water passing into an immense expanse of floating marsh towards the east.

The last census gives Vermilion a population of 3973 souls; its crops are cotton, sugar, rice and fruits; its principal sources of wealth are its cattle, poultry and game; the area of the open land is 83,753, which comprehends much of the prairie never under cultivation.

## PARISH OF ST. LANDRY.

This, next to Calcasieu, is the largest parish in the State, and it is the most populous, next to the parish of Orleans. It contains about 1,350,000 acres of land, three-quarters of which may be cultivated. Within its limits are found four of the characteristic features of the State of Louisiana, namely, hilly uplands, rolling prairie, the bluff plateau, and alluvial bottoms. It contains no sea marsh.

The parish is bounded on the north by Rapides and Avoyelles, on the east by Pointe Coupée and Iberville, on the south by St. Martin, Lafayette and Vermilion, and on the west by Calcasieu.

The Atchafalaya river forms the eastern boundary line. West of the Teche a line of high lands runs to Washington, keeping generally parallel to the bayou. At Washington this line bears northwest, following the course of Bayou Crocodile beyond the northern boundary of the parish. All the space included between the Atchafalaya and this line is an alluvial bottom. Through this bottom a large number of bayous find their way into the Atchafalaya; among these the principal are the Crocodile (pronounced "Cocodrie"), the Bœuf, Bayou Courtableau, the Teche, Bayou Rouge, Bayou Petite Prairie, Bayou Waukesha (or Ouachita), Taquette Bayou, and several others of lesser importance. On all of these more or less of fine tillable land is found, but especially along the Crocodile, the Bœuf, the Teche, and Bayou Courtableau, are tracts of most beautiful lands.

The inhabitants of the Bœuf country claim for their lands a successful rivalry of those of the Teche, even where the latter are the most excellent and beautiful. Between the bayous and in the vicinity of the Atchafalaya large areas of swamp land are found. All of these bottom lands are densely wooded, except where cleared for cultivation, the forest growth being that so frequently mentioned as characteristic of the Mississippi bottoms.

The bluff lands lie along the crest of the high land, above marked out, beginning on the south at Grand Coteau, passing through the neighborhood of Opelousas, and terminating at or near Washington. This belt of bluff passes off in an undulating surface towards the west, and melts so gradually into the regular prairies that it is difficult to detect the line of demarkation. I do not think this belt will anywhere exceed four miles in width, and I believe it is generally less. All of this belt is a beautiful country, especially in the vicinity of Grand Coteau and Opelousas.



North of a line following the Bayou Nez Pique to its headwaters, and thence near Chicotville to the Crocodile, the country is hilly, covered with the long-leaf pine, oaks, ash, hickory, elms, dogwood, walnut and other common upland trees. This is the beginning of the great pinery of the State, which was fully described in my last year's report, and will be frequently referred to in subsequent portions of this.

All of the parish south of this hill country, and west of the bluff belt is prairie with the exception of the wooded borders of the several streams which drain this extensive area. These streams are the Nez Piqué, Pine Prairie Bayou, Bayou Cannes, Bayou Mallet, and the two forks of Bayou Plaquemine Brulee. The tracts of prairie lying between these various belts of woodland have received different names. The first of these on the north is Pine Prairie, so named from the islands or clusters of pine trees scattered in picturesque irregularity over its gently rolling surface. Then comes the Grand Prairie Mamon, extending southward between the Nez Piqué and Bayou Cannes to their junction. This prairie is fifty miles in length and at points between ten and twelve miles in width. Next is Prairie Faquetyke, between the Cannes and Mallet, some thirty miles in length and frequently six and eight miles in width. Still further south and east are Plaquemine Prairie, Hays' Prairie, Roberts' Cove, Grand Prairie, and the vast Mermentau Prairie, extending from Grand Coteau to the junction of Bayou Queue de Tortue with the Mermentau river. Within these extensive prairies, and along their borders are small areas nearly surrounded by trees which are called "coves," and have their local names.

These prairies are all vast treeless expanses, covered with a luxuriant growth of grass. Generally they are quite level, but occasionally huge swells will cross them from side to side like the mighty billows of a deep sea. Standing on one of these the view is very enchanting. The green carpet spreads out all around you, bounded by the distant horizon or terminated by the dark lines of forest that project into the prairie like the headlands of a lake. Scattered here and there are the little farms and homesteads of the few inhabitants, and roaming everywhere are their immense herds of cattle and horses.

Through these prairies numberless tracks are made by their cattle in their journeys to and from their watering places, which as pre-

viously described, are natural ponds, marais and coulées. The inhabitants know which of these trails are their "bons chemins," but a stranger would do well to rely only on his compass and look sharply to his bearings in traversing these broad spaces so destitute of striking landmarks, as every trail will seem equally "bon" to him.

In my journeyings through more than thirty parishes of the State I have not yet seen a more inviting field for immigrant colonies than the prairies of St. Landry. The area of unsettled, and even unentered land is immense. The soil is good, easily cultivated, and by a judicious system of "fallowing by tramping" may be improved and kept in a very productive condition for any length of time. Even the small farmers now tilling portions of these prairies, in spite of their little energy, and less care, make from thirty to forty bushels of corn to the acre, and other things in proportion. But the fine pasturage and the ease with which stock may be raised on the prairies, constitute their greatest attraction. The present inhabitants, however, make but comparatively poor use of their fine advantages in this respect. No effort is made to improve the breed of their cattle and horses, and what they now raise are neglected through the winter months. Although we now see large herds of cattle and horses wandering at will on all sides and find them in good condition in the summer and fall, yet there can be no doubt but that there is room for much improvement in the system of stock raising, pursued by the Creoles of St. Landry. The numbers of their herds might be increased ten fold and their quality advanced in probably a greater ratio. The wealth which this resource alone would then bring to the parish would be something enormous.

In addition, the lowlands produce corn, cotton and cane in great abundance, while the uplands and prairies are nearly equal to any in the State for their staple productions, and admirably adapted to the raising of potatoes, rye, barley, oats, peas, pindars, and the garden vegetables.

The population of St. Landry, by the last census, is 24,732 souls. The area of improved lands something less than 100,000 acres.

#### THE PARISHES OF CALCASIEU AND CAMERON.

I have included these parishes in the same description because the parish of Cameron was not organized at the time of my visit to it.

last summer, although created some months previous to that time. It is composed of the southern part of Calcasieu, and contains but a small habitable surface and a sparse population. Its surface presents but two grand features, namely: a vast, impracticable sea marsh on the south and a part of the great Calcasieu prairie on the north. Lake Calcasieu divides it into two nearly equal areas. East of this lake the sea marsh is fifteen miles in depth for ten or twelve miles; then it extends further inland until its inner border is twenty-five miles from the Gulf coast, when it again bears southward, and terminates at the mouth of the Mermentau river, in the lake of the same name. West of Calcasieu lake the sea marsh averages twenty-five miles in depth.

Within all of this area there are but the following habitable spots: The Little Cheniere Island; a narrow ridge along the Mermentau river to its mouth; thence to the mouth of Calcasieu Pass; thence still along the Gulf coast, and but a short distance from it to the mouth of Sabine Pass; also, Hackberry Island, west of Calcasieu Lake; a part of St. John's Island, in the southern part of the same lake, and along Calcasieu Pass to its mouth; also at a few points along Sabine Pass, and along Johnson's Bayou, Black Bayou, and a few smaller bayous emptying into Sabine Lake. All of these lands, although above the ordinary tidal overflow, are subject to the unusual high floods produced by long continued gales from the south. Nearly all of these points have suffered in these extraordinary floods, and like Last Island, off the coast of Terrebonne, are rather precarious places of residence. Still, the lands are so good, and the climate generally so fine, that the inhabitants cling to their homes in spite of occasional disasters.

The population of Cameron is 1596; its productions are cotton, rice, corn, cattle, fish, oysters, oranges, figs, bananas, game.

#### THE PARISH OF CALCASIEU.

Is bounded on the north by Rapides, on the east by St. Landry, on the south by Cameron, and on the west by the State of Texas. Bayou Nez Piqué forms its eastern boundary line, and the Sabine river its western. The Calcasieu river courses through the parish from north to south, and has the following principal tributaries, namely, running in from the east: Bayou Serpent, English Bayou

and Bayou Osier. Flowing in from the west, Bayou Whisky Chitto, (or Ouisky Chitto), Bundick's Creek, Barnes' or Martin's Creek, Hickory Branch and Beckwith's Creek, (which by their confluence form Deep Bayou), and the west fork of Calcasieu river. Flowing southeasterly into Lake Mermentau is Bayou Lacassine, and into Nez Piqué is Bayou Blue. North of Bayou Blue, and between the Nez Piqué and Calcasieu, the country is a succession of small prairies and timbered flats—the prairies predominating as we go south, and the timber as we go north. The principal of the lesser prairies are Prairie Swallow, Godfrey's Prairie and Prairie D'Arbonne.

The timber of all this region, with the exception of the creek bottoms, is mostly the long leaf pine, with scattered blackjack and post-oak and hickory. Between the headwaters of Bayou Blue and the Calcasieu is a tract of level land, some eight or ten miles long by from two to three in width, where the hickory tree prevails to such an extent as to give it the name of "Hickory Flats." South of Bayou Blue begins the great Calcasieu Prairie, which is the most extensive uninterrupted prairie in the State. It embraces all the country between the Nez Piqué and Calcasieu, on the east and west, and between Bayou Blue and the sea marsh, on the north and south. Its length, from northeast to southwest, is over fifty miles, and its breadth is frequently as much as twenty-five miles. Crossing the Calcasieu river, between Lake Charles and Lake Calcasieu, the prairies continue their westward sweep to the Sabine river, a distance, in a direct line, of about thirty miles. This last prairie is bounded on the north by a line of timber mainly parallel to the west fork of Calcasieu, and averaging three miles from that stream. Points of timber extending southward from this belt of woodland, and numberless islands of trees separate this prairie into a number of subdivisions, which have local names. The two largest of these subdivisions are Little Calcasieu and Sabine prairies. The line marked out in the description of St. Landry as passing near Chicotville, and along the line of the upper Nez Piqué, and forming the limit of the long leaf pine belt, continues southwest along the western boundary of Calcasieu prairie to Lake Charles, and thence bears due west to the Sabine. West and north of this line lies a vast tract of level country covered with the long leaf pines, excepting immediately along the borders of the streams. This tract is from eight to ten miles in width in the northeast corner of the parish.



and becomes twenty miles in width just north of the west fork of Calcasieu. Passing these pine flats, the country becomes rolling, then hilly, and finally quite broken, across the northern limits of the parish.

Having thus marked out the grand topographical features of Calcasieu parish, I will now notice some special ones of interest and importance.

The Calcasieu river and all of its tributaries taking their rise in the pine hills, are clear, bold, beautiful streams, in their first stages, affording fine mill sites, and abounding in trout, perch, pike and other choice fresh water fishes. Both branches of the Calcasieu, after they have reached the low, level lands, become deep, quite navigable to the largest boats, and very picturesque, with their banks fringed with a luxuriant forest of red and white cypress and live oaks. These streams frequently open out into bays and lakes that add greatly to their beauty. One of these is Lake Charles, on which is situated the village of the same name, the courthouse town of the parish. The lake is an almost perfect circle, two miles in diameter, and is as handsome a sheet of water as any one would wish to see. The village is as yet but a small settlement, but the advantages of its position and its healthfulness will, without doubt, make it the leading town in Southwest Louisiana.

All around Lake Charles, and for several miles up both branches of the Calcasieu, the saw mills are so thickly located as to give the whole country the appearance of an immense lumber yard. There are seventeen steam saw mills within a space of ten miles in diameter. These saw and ship millions of feet of the best of pine, red and white cypress lumber yearly, giving constant employment to over sixty sailing vessels.

This lumber trade is at present the principal source of wealth of the parish, but it has other resources yet undeveloped, which will one day be of greater value than even its inexhaustible forests. Large areas of the sea marsh are admirably adapted to the cultivation of rice, and all of the southern portion of the parish will produce oranges, figs and bananas in profusion.

Like the other parishes containing prairies, its stock-raising interests are but little better than in their infancy. And even for the production of the great Southern staples, cotton and sugar, much of the parish is far better adapted than is generally supposed. All of

the creeks have some fine tillable lands on their bottoms, and along the sides of the spurs that slope down to the bottoms. During my last summer's reconnoissance circumstances made it necessary for me to spend a week in the valley of Bundick's Creek. Here I found a thrifty settlement of some twenty families cultivating the uplands and bottoms, and during my whole journey I did not meet a more hospitable, independent and well to do people. Compared with the broad acres of the Teche planter, one of the little farms on Bundick's Creek would seem very insignificant, but there was this difference, the Bundick's Creek farmer made everything he wanted—his sugar, his flour, his meat, his corn, cotton, wool and clothes, and had a handsome surplus for sale, which gave him a pocketful of ready cash; moreover, he had no long list of heavy expenses, no commission merchant, and no enormous debt weighing him down. His humble cabin would present a strong contrast to the lordly mansion on the coast of the Mississippi, but I found the most genuine hospitality under the humbler roof, and I take the greatest pleasure in acknowledging my indebtedness to Mr. G. W. Richardson, to Esquire McClelland, to Mr. L. Jones and all the gentlemen in their neighborhoods for their kindness and courtesy. In addition to mere creature comforts in abundance the Bundick's Creek settlement has a flourishing school, a well built church and an active Masonic Lodge of some two or three dozen members.

All of the pine country of Calcasieu abounds in game; deer bound across your path as you travel the long lonely roads; bears, panthers, wolves and wild cats prey upon the farmer's sheep and hogs from the swamps, and of wild turkeys, ducks and smaller game there is no limit to the supply.

I will now notice the most remarkable region in Calcasieu, or probably in the State, namely, the oil and sulphur region, fifteen miles west of Lake Charles. Through the kindness of Dr. Kirkman, of Lake Charles, I had in his company a very pleasant and instructive visit to this region. The road from Lake Charles passes for a few miles, after crossing Calcasieu river at Hortman's ferry, through a hilly country, lying south of the west fork of Calcasieu, then for several miles through pine flats and small prairies, then through a broad prairie bounded by the horizon to the southward, and then for two miles through a rough knolled and tangled hummock belt.

Emerging from this, an open wet prairie, or half dry marsh, lies before you, dotted all over its surface with little mounds and islets of trees. This is the oil and sulphur region. The evidences of oil consist in a number of black banks of hardened bitumen on the northern border of the marsh prairie, and on its surface; also, quite a number of bubbling springs, emitting an inflammable gas; and crude petroleum may be found by walking over the marsh. So abundant is this natural discharge of crude oil, that the log-haulers for miles around obtain their only supply of lubricating material from these springs. And yet the boring made in one of the most promising spots, to obtain a more abundant flow of oil, was almost entirely unsuccessful. The oil was, at one stage of the boring, obtained in considerable quantity, but was soon exhausted. The well was continued still further down into the bowels of the earth, and, instead of more oil, the marvelous deposit of sulphur, now so well known throughout the State, was discovered.

The extent of this sulphur stratum, its purity, and the probable rationale of its formation, have all been fully treated by Dr. Hopkins, in his last year's geological report. I will only add, therefore, that the oil and sulphur are not all the wonders of this strange region. Not more than fifty yards from the sulphur well, a sour spring boils up, whose water is nearly as acid as unsweetened lemonade; but a few hundred paces further, a strong chalybeate spring is found, and wells running salt brine may be had almost anywhere on the marsh for the boring. Another peculiarity of this marsh prairie is, that it is almost entirely surrounded by a narrow rim of high land, some six or eight feet above the general level, and covered with a fine body of upland trees.

Some five miles northeast of the oil and sulphur region, is a belt of country called the "Big Woods." It receives its name from a fine grove of oaks, magnolias, ash, etc., with which it is clothed. The soil of this belt is very different from that of the surrounding country, and is of great depth and fertility. This Big Woods belt bears the same relation to the surrounding prairies and pine flats that the Chenieres and Pecan Island do to the sea marsh on the coast. Along the Sabine river, the land is low, overflowed and covered with a growth of cypress and swamp shrubs, palmettoes, etc. This tract varies in width from one to five miles, and is interrupted at only two points, namely, at Niblet's Bluff and Spike's Ferry.

The population of Calcasieu parish is 6733. Its productions are lumber, cotton, rice, sugar, fruits and cattle. The area of improved land, 8621 acres.

#### WESTERN PART OF RAPIDES.

The parish of Rapides was noticed in my last report, but that portion lying east of Red river was more especially the field of the investigations therein recorded. Last summer, I rode through the larger part of the parish lying west of Red river.

The line of high lands traced, in the description of St. Landry, from Opelousas to Moundville, and thence up the Crocodile bayou, continues in a northwest direction, parallel to the western bank of that bayou, to Crocodile swamp, in township one south, range one west, about six miles west of the village of Cheneyville. Enveloping this swamp, the hills trend northward, and strike the Bœuf opposite Le Compté, six miles north of Crocodile swamp. Thence they follow the course of the Bœuf to the bold projecting point called McNutt's Hill, ten miles west of the town of Alexandria. From this point, they sweep around the low lands of Bayou Rapides and Cotile, and abut against Red river, just above Cotile Landing. Thence they bear northwest again, to Monett's Ferry, beyond the limits of Rapides.

All of Rapides west of this line belongs to the "pine hill country." The surface is rolling and hilly, and gradually increases in elevation to a high dividing ridge between the waters of Calcasieu river and those of Anacoco bayou, the latter flowing westward into the Sabine river. This country is cut up by a great number of streams, tributaries of the two above named, and on their bottoms are the usual narrow and moderately fertile valleys. On those streams flowing into the Sabine some fine farms are found, the valleys spreading out a mile or more in width at points.

The soil of the hills is generally that common to the long leaf pine country, light, sandy, and infertile. There is, however, an exception to this general rule, in a peculiar belt beginning on the Castor Bayou, near Huddleston (now Petersburg), in township one north, range nine west, and extending eighteen or twenty miles west-northwest, to Flactor creek, near its entrance into the Calcasieu. This belt, though not altogether continuous in a north and south direction, characterizes the country between Huddleston and Ana-



coco prairie, a distance of eight miles. Eastward of this line it is narrower, its average width being probably not more than three or four miles. The peculiarity of this belt consists in the stiff, tarry soil ("hog wallow" land) with which it is covered. It is a poor country except on the creek bottoms, and its growth is mainly the same as the other hills, namely, the long leaf pine. It has, in addition, however, a dense undergrowth of scrub post oak and black-jack. The whole of this belt is very similar to one described in my last report, lying between the junction of Dugdemona and Castor Bayous, in Catahoula parish, and Grandview, in Caldwell. I think it more than probable connecting links may be found between the two in future investigations.

On the creek bottoms of West Rapides I noticed the following forest trees, viz: Oaks, ashes, elms, poplars, beeches, magnolias, iron-wood, sweet and black gums, dogwoods, and in the hog wallow region, hawthorns, wild plums and the thorn bushes. The crops are cotton and corn, potatoes, and the cereal grains to some extent. The population of Rapides by the last census is 18,015. The area of improved lands about 100,000 acres.

#### PARISH OF SABINE.

The parish of Sabine is bounded on the North by De Soto, on the east by Natchitoches, on the south by Rapides, and on the west by Shelby and Sabine counties in Texas. The Sabine river is the western boundary line. The parish is fifty-seven miles in length from north to south, and thirty in width. Near the eastern boundary there is a high dividing ridge between the waters which flow into Red river, and to those flowing in the Sabine. West of this ridge are the Anacoco Bayou, with its two forks, Bayou Toreau, Bayou Negret, Bayou Lenan (formerly Lanana), Bayou San Miguel, Bayou San Patricio and Bear Creek, all with numerous smaller tributaries, flowing from northeast to southwest.

Beginning with the southern boundary of Sabine parish, we find in the southeast corner of T. 3, N. R. 9 W. the Anacoco prairies a mile and a half wide by three miles long. This is one of the small tracts of the rich black loamy lands, already noticed in last year's report, as peculiar in their irregular distribution over the northern part of Louisiana. It is similar to Pendarris Prairie in Catahoula, and like it, is on the outskirts of the hog wallow lands. The soil is

rich in lime, and produces the grain crops in great abundance. The prairie is nearly surrounded by hills, and with its level surface covered with luxuriant dark green crops and waving grass (where uncultivated), it presents the appearance of an inland lake. Its lacustrine or marine origin can hardly be doubted.

From this point northward to the extreme limits of Sabine the surface is high and broken, excepting along the borders of the various streams above named. The valleys of the streams are generally narrow and subject to sudden and serious overflows. In all of them, however, farms are found, and along the Torceau some moderately extensive plantations are located.

While the surface is pretty generally the same throughout the whole of Sabine, yet there is considerable variety in the soil and forest growth. Six miles south of Manny, the courthouse town, a belt of "red lands" stretches across the parish, extending from the northeast to southwest. This belt varies in width from one-half mile to four, or perhaps more. Its soil is deep blood-red, strongly impregnated with iron, and quite fertile; it is especially adapted to the growing of corn, barley, wheat and rye. Ferruginous conglomerates, and highly colored ocherous earths cover the entire surface of this red land section. It is the northern limit of the long leaf pine country, and the sandy hills. The forests of the red lands themselves, are largely composed of oaks, hickories and other trees, besides the pines. North of this region the short leafed pine becomes the prevailing tree on the poor lands, and on the better it is almost crowded out by oaks, hickories, dogwoods, beeches, elms, ashes, and other upland trees requiring a good strong soil. In the southern part of Sabine the high hills are capped with a coarse, semi-formed sand rock; north of the red lands limestone rocks appear. In south Sabine the water is free stone, and very fine, except in the hog wallow lands and prairies; in the northern part of the parish the wells are generally not good, the water being hard or having a lignitic taste. The courthouse town, Manny, is situated near the centre of the parish, it is an old dilapidated village, having nothing of interest to mention. It stands on a dividing line of the parish with reference to productiveness and fertility. All north of Manny is a much better country than that to the south, after excepting the narrow belt of red lands, and Anacoco prairie. The

population of Sabine is 6458 ; the productions corn, cotton and small grains ; the area of improved land is 26,350 acres.

#### PARISH OF DE SOTO.

This parish is bounded on the north by Caddo, on the east by Caddo and Nachitoches, on the South by Sabine, and on the west by Shelby and Panola counties, in Texas.

It may be called, considered as a whole, a good upland parish. It has been long settled, and much of its land is old and worn, and its surface, where cultivated, washed and gullied ; but there is a general appearance of wealth, prosperity and improvement pervading the entire parish. Starting at the southeast corner, near the village of Pleasant Hill, we find the continuation of the dividing ridge, already noticed in the account of Sabine. This ridge, crossing the parish diagonally, passes beyond its limits in the vicinity of the village of Keachi. Mansfield, the courthouse town, is situated near the centre of the parish, and on the dividing ridge. East of this ridge a number of small bayous flow into the lakes and bayous of the Red river bottom. To the west all the streams flow into the Sabine. The most important of the eastward-flowing streams are Cypress bayou (the northern boundary line), which empties into Wallace lake ; Rambin's bayou, which empties into Bayou Pierre lake, and bayous Fardoche, Narbonchasse, Siferin, with their numerous tributaries, which also flow into the same lake. The streams flowing into Sabine river are larger than those just named ; they are Garrison bayou, Bushnack bayou, Bayou Castor, Grand Cane and Clement, Cow bayou, and the head water tributaries of Bayou San Patricio.

From the dividing ridge the country falls off in long rolling spurs to the bottoms of the two main rivers on the east and west. On the west the spurs abut against the Sabine at Bart's Buff and Ashton's Ferry, and generally leave but a narrow valley between them and the banks of the river. On the east the spurs terminate in the line of lakes through which the waters of Bayou Pierre find their way from and into Red river. These lakes are Wallace lake, Cannissna lake, Bayou Pierre lake, Dolets lake, and several other smaller ones not named. Between these lakes and Red river is the usual river bottom, with its good lands and swamps, and numberless bayous. These latter bayous are constantly shifting their positions, or chang-

ing in size, depth and importance. Grand bayou and Wimsey bayou have both of late years become main navigable channels. All the lakes in this part of Louisiana are also undergoing considerable changes. Most of them are much smaller and shallower than when the country around them was first settled, and several that are noticed on the earlier maps of this region have disappeared, and their localities are now known by a low, flat swamp, through which winds some small bayou. The soil of DeSoto is generally a yellow loam, of good quality on the hills and very fine on the creek bottoms. The most productive and wealthiest part of the parish is the Grand Cane country, along the bayou of the same name and all of its tributaries. The forests of this region plainly indicates the strength of the soil. It is almost equal to that of Sicily Island in the variety and size of the natural growth.

Beeches, poplars, red, white, chestnut, pin, water, black and other varieties of oaks, maples, elms, ashes, hickories, walnuts, and magnolias, are all found here in great abundance and perfection. In the southern part of DeSoto the short leaf pine is found in considerable quantities, but this tree almost disappears as we reach the vicinity of Mansfield; and north of that point the pine is found only in isolated tracts. Between Rambin's bayou is a post oak flat, some two or three miles in width, which presents some very peculiar features. The forest is luxuriant, and would seem to indicate a good soil, but the absence of undergrowth shrubs and vines plainly shows that the contrary is the case. Hawthorns and other scrub thorn bushes are evidences of lime in the soil, and occasional bare or open spaces look something like the prairie regions. But the most striking feature of this flat is the countless number of little knolls dotted over the whole surface. These knolls are seldom over three or four feet in height, and vary in diameter from ten to one hundred feet. They are nearly flat top, and generally covered with a tuft of thorn bushes. They are very similar to the islets and "lumps" in the marsh prairies of Calcasieu.

The crops of DeSoto are corn, cotton, potatoes and grain. The population is 14,964. The area of improved land is 96,591 acres.

#### PARISH OF CADDO.

This is the extreme northwestern parish of the State, bounded on the north by Lafayette county, Arkansas, on the east by the parish



of Bossier, with the Red river for its boundary line ; on the south by De Soto, and on the west by Cass, Marion, and Harrison counties, Texas. It is very peculiar and irregular in shape, part of the parish consisting of a long, narrow neck of land, lying along the Red river, between De Soto and Bossier.

To systematize, as far as possible, the topography of Caddo, I will begin at the southwest corner. Here we find the dividing ridge between the waters of Red river and the Sabine, already mentioned in the accounts of Sabine and De Soto parishes. To the north and east of it we find the head water tributaries of Cypress, Buchanan, Boggy, and Gilmer bayous. These bayous, flowing eastward, unite to form Wallace bayou and empty into Wallace lake. All the country drained by these bayous is a rolling, good, upland country, with a strong, oak growth prevailing. In the western part of the parish and near Spring Ridge the short leaf pine is found to some extent, and in fact occasional pine trees may be seen almost anywhere in the section of Caddo we are now noticing, but they have ceased to form a characteristic feature.

The bottoms of the creeks and bayous in this part of Caddo are subject to overflow and are almost impassible in wet weather. On all roads crossing these streams long bridges have to be built from highland to highland, entirely spanning the boggy bottoms. The second bottoms and hill side slopes contain good farming lands, which have been extensively cleared, and produce good crops of corn and cotton. A secondary ridge separates the waters of Gilmer bayou from those that flow into Cross lake. This ridge trends nearly east and west, is the site of the railroad from Marshall to Shreveport, and terminates on Red river at the latter town. The numerous spurs on either side of it, and more especially on the Cross lake side, give quite a broken character to the surface.

The narrow belt of land between Bayou Pierre and Red river is all alluvial, generally settled and under cultivation along the banks of the river, and to some extent along those of the bayou. Between the two are the usual cross bayous and swamps and cypress brakes.

North of Shreveport, the topography of Caddo is almost wholly the result of an incidental feature of Red river, namely, its celebrated raft. At all events, so much was this portion of Caddo under the influence of Red river and its raft during my last summer's recon-

noissance, that it was next to impossible for me to visit it in person. The continuous rains during the month of August had overflowed the low lands along Red river, and rendered a horseback examination of them impracticable. From Captain Leavenworth and other gentlemen of Shreveport, I gathered the following points:

The damming of Red river by the raft causes the surplus waters of every rise of any extent to spread themselves to the westward of the river, thus forming, in the course of time, numerous lakes, bayous, cypress brakes and swamps. The principal lakes are Cross Lake, Soda Lake, Clear Lake, Shifttail Lake, Ferry Lake, Caddo Lake and Black Lake, with numerous other smaller ones. The most important bayous are Cross Bayou, Middle Bayou, Borman's Shoot, Twelve-mile Bayou, Black Bayou, New and Old Red Bayous, Horse-shoe, Trinity, Cottonwood, Black Lake and Stumpy Bayous. In the northeastern corner of the parish is a large cypress brake, covering nearly half a township; through another, somewhat less in extent, Black Bayou runs into Clear Lake, and other smaller ones lie between the lakes and Red river. That the lakes above named owe their origin to the overflows caused by the raft, and are of recent date, is made manifest by the forest of dead trees still standing with limbless trunks, in the midst of the wastes of water. At high water, all these lakes are large, deep bodies of water, extending to the base of the hills that surround them; with such dimensions they are usually represented on the maps of this State. At low water, they are much diminished in size, have wide, flat, muddy margins, and in some cases the entire lake will become a mud flat, with a sinuous bayou marking out its deepest parts.

The country between Cross Lake and Soda Lake, north of it, is hilly, with numerous spurs and bluffs extending to the borders of the two lakes. In general features, it is similar to that already described, lying south of Cross Lake. North of Soda Lake, as far as I could learn, the same country is found, becoming, however, rather more level. Within the region occupied by the lakes are occasional islands of high land, as Pine Island, in Clear Lake.

It is probably needless for me to attempt a description of the raft, as it has already been so frequently and fully described. I visited it at several points, from the east side of the river, and found its lowest limit to be now just above Carolina Bluffs. At this point it consists of detached islands of willows and small collections of

snags, but there is no continuous obstruction across the river. For two miles we find the same characteristics, and then we come to a genuine raft, extending solidly from bank to bank, a matted mass of tree tops and trunks, weeds and canes, with cottonwood and willow trees growing upon its surface. This extends two hundred yards or more up the river, and gives place to a clear, open stretch of half a mile. And so for eight miles we find more open spaces than obstructed ones. Thence northward the raft becomes almost unbroken for nearly twenty miles. It has grown at its upper extremity quite rapidly within the last year, and fears were entertained, at the time of my visit, that navigation to Fulton was, or soon would be, entirely interrupted. Shreveport, the parish seat of justice, is well situated, on high, rolling ground; is probably the second city in size of the State, and is certainly second to none but New Orleans in the amount of business of all kinds which it does.

The population of Caddo is 21,719. Its productions are cotton and corn, and grains to some extent. The area of improved lands is 98,928 acres.

#### PARISH OF BOSSIER.

Bossier parish is bounded on the north by Lafayette county, in Arkansas, on the east by Claiborne and Bienville parishes, and on the west by Caddo. It is enclosed between Red river on the west, and Dorchite Bayou and Lake Bisteneau on the east.

It is generally a rich farming country, with considerable diversity of soil and surface formation. Situated near the centre of the parish is Lake Bodcau, which is fifteen miles in length, and varying in width according to the stage of water. At low water it is hardly more than a widening out of Bayou Bodcau, which flows into its northern extremity. During a season of high water it expands to several miles in width. Cypress Bayou flows into the southern extremity of Lake Bodcau, after running about eighteen miles nearly parallel to Red river. Bayou Bodcau flows out of the southern end of the lake, and after a course of over twenty miles, in a north and south direction, becomes united, through numerous lakes and bayous, with Lake Bisteneau and Red river. Flowing into Lake Bisteneau, are Foxskin, Clark's and Honey Bayous.

These various streams and lakes divide the parish up into areas

which are different from each, and which I will now notice in detail. Beginning with Red river on the west, we find the usual rich alluvial bottom along its entire course. In the northern part of the parish, and down to the village of Benton, this bottom is not wide, and is interrupted by projecting points of high land that abut against the river, as at Wilson's Bluff, Cushatta Landing and Carolina Bluffs. At Benton the high lands bend sharply to the east, and leave a wide bottom south of that point, between Red river and Bayou Bodcau. All of this expanded bottom is cut up and subdivided by a labyrinthine net-work of cross bayous and small lakes. From Benton to Shreveport the bottom is protected by good levees, and is as beautiful a cotton growing country as any in the State.

As we go further south the lands become lower, and finally in the extreme southern part of the parish cease to be arable. Between Red River and Cypress Bayou, a belt of six miles in breadth, is a rolling, red clay, hilly country, with a mixed growth of oaks, hickories, dogwoods and short-leaf pines; this is only a moderately good farming tract. East of Cypress Bayou lies a belt of *red lands* trending from north a little west of south, from the northern boundary of the State to the mouth of Cypress Bayou. This belt is characterized, as in Sabine, by the high hills, ferruginous rocks, ocherous earths and mixed oak and pine growth. Between this high country and Lake Bodcau is a level post-oak flat, so perfectly level over much of its surface as to be nearly impassable after heavy rains. South of Lake Bodcau the country again becomes high and hilly, and occasionally characterized by the features of the red lands. This hill country consists of long narrow ridges, trending due south, and is drained by Foxskin and Clark's Bayous.

Between Bodcau Bayou and Bayou Dorchite, a long level country extends from the northern boundary of the parish to Lake Bisteneau. This country is variable in quality; some is poor and sandy, covered with short-leaved pines, some is a white crawfish soil, with a growth of dogwood and post oaks, and almost as infertile as the pine lands, while other portions, where well drained, are very fine cotton and corn lands. Especially is this the case in the neighborhood of the village of Cotton Valley. From three to six miles east of Belleview, the parish seat of justice, several small prairies are found. Their soil is white and seems to be very unproductive; the usual prairie



grass flowers and thorn bushes cover them. Belleview is a pleasant village, of one hundred and fifty to two hundred inhabitants. The crops of Bossier parish are corn, cotton and grain. It is probably one of the best cotton parishes in the State. Many persons think the parish will one day acquire great profit from the iron rocks found in such abundance on the hills of the red lands. This is hardly possible until the so much richer and more easily wrought and more accessible ores of iron found in every part of the United States are exhausted. It is true that Bossier and Claiborne and Jackson parishes might supply themselves with iron from their own hill sides, but, until they become completely isolated from the rest of the world, they would do well to seek their supply elsewhere. These iron rocks, though looking extremely rich in iron, are yet so largely composed of sand as to be appropriately named *ferruginous sand rocks*. It is more than probable, however, that the ocherous pigments might be made in this region with profit.

The population of Bossier is 12,675. It is eminently a cotton parish; corn and grain are also extensively made. The area of improved land is 91,583 acres.

#### PARISH OF CLAIBORNE AND NORTH JACKSON.

Claiborne is bounded on the north by Arkansas, on the east by Union parish, on the south by Bienville, and on the west by Bossier. It is a large, populous, and generally well improved parish. Its inhabitants are thrifty, intelligent and enterprising. A stranger in Claiborne sees more to remind him of a county of one of the more eastern and older States than anywhere else in Louisiana. The parish generally may be called a good upland, rolling country, with a mingled growth of oaks, short leaf pines, dogwood, hickories, chinquapins, etc., on the hills, and ashes, elms, beeches, sweet and black gums, on the bottoms. The soil is generally of a grayish color, and sandy, on a subsoil of red clay. There are some exceptions to this, however, and to fix the localities where such exceptions occur, I will indicate the drainage of the parish. Dorchite Bayou forms the western boundary line, and has flowing into it Cypress Creek, near the northern boundary. Going southward, we come successively to Indian Creek, Black Bayou, Flat Lick Bayou, and Bayou Coulans. Rising in the southern part of the parish, and flowing

southward, are Crow's Creek, Lick Creek and Leatherman's Creek, all tributaries of Black Lake Bayou. Flowing eastward, are three large streams—Corney Bayou, middle fork of Darbonne, and Darbonne Bayou, tributaries of Ouachita river. The dividing ridge between the waters flowing westward and those flowing eastward coincides nearly with the range line between ranges seven and eight west. The ridge between the waters flowing south and those of Darbonne is just south of the courthouse town, Homer, and, trending southeastward, becomes a towering ridge, almost mountainous, in the northeast corner of Bienville and the northwest corner of Jackson. North of Indian Creek, the country, though high, is generally flat. The same is true of the lands lying between Corney Creek and middle fork of Darbonne, and between the latter stream and the main branch of Darbonne. Naturally, these tracts become more broken near the bottoms of the main streams, where the numerous small tributaries take their rise, and cut out their narrow valleys.

Between Black and Flat Lick bayous, a belt of the *red lands* occurs, and also between Minden and Homer scattered patches of the same lands are found. The southeastern corner of the parish is altogether this red land, which continues thence into Jackson, where all of its characteristics are developed in their greatest force. Through all of these red land regions the rough iron rocks are found, causing the roads to be exceedingly disagreeable to the rider, and very severe on his horse. The forest growth is mixed oak, hickory and short leaf pine, sometimes the latter strongly prevailing. In my report of last year, I remarked upon the peculiarities of these red lands; I will give, however, a brief summary of their qualities. To a stranger, they present a most unpromising appearance, rough, hilly, blood-red, covered with sharp angular fragments of ferruginous rock, they little exhibit, by external features, that fertility which makes them so highly prized by their owners. In the northern part of Jackson parish, Mr. Allen Green, of Greensboro', owns a large plantation on the red lands. He informed me that some of his fields had been cultivated over forty years, and show no signs of exhaustion. They are excellent lands for corn and the smaller grains. Mr. Green's plantation stands on probably the highest ridge in the State, and as I toiled up the steep ascent to his airy home, I little thought I would find a fine, flourishing farm, a neat, growing village, an extensive factory of

leather, shoes, saddles and harness in connection with a large steam saw and grist mill.

All north of Vernon in Jackson parish is mostly the hilly red land country; then the country becomes sandy, the soil light grayish in color, and the long leaf pines become the prevailing forest growth. I will here call attention to the exact parallelism between the circumstances just mentioned and those occurring in Sabine parish.

There is one striking difference between South and North Louisiana that deserves notice. In South Louisiana we find large plantations and very few villages, while in the northern part of the State we observe that the opposite is the case. In Claiborne parish we find this fact well exemplified. Minden and Homer are both handsome flourishing villages, with good schools for male and females, good churches and stores, and contain a thrifty, intelligent, enterprising population. In addition to these (the principal towns) are Athens, Germantown, Tulip, Terryville, Kimbalville, Lisbon, Arizona, which contains a cotton factory, Colquit, Gordon, Haynesville and Shongaloo, all villages of more or less importance. The population of Claiborne is 20,252; of Jackson, 7,745. Crops of both, cotton, corn and small grains. The area of improved land of Claiborne is 114,699 acres; of Jackson 70,873 acres.

#### PARISHES OF UNION AND NORTH OUACHITA.

Union is another of the extreme northern parishes bounded on the north by a county of Arkansas of the same name, on the east by Morehouse with the Ouachita river for the line, on the south by Ouachita and Jackson, and on the west by Claiborne parish. It is similar to Claiborne in many respects but is hardly so good a parish taken as a whole. Bayou L'Outre, Corney Creek, and the D'Arbonne, with its two main forks, flow through the parish from northwest to southeast. Between each two of these streams we find as in Claiborne the high, level dividing ridge of good, sandy uplands become more broken as we near the main valleys. The bottoms of the streams are generally subject to overflow, but are often susceptible of cultivation. The smaller tributaries, however, seem generally to give the best farming districts. The northeastern part of Union is also a hilly country, but the soil is thinner and more sandy than the western, and the country is not so thickly settled as the western and

southern parts of the parish. Between Vienna, in Jackson parish, and Farmerville, the courthouse town of Union, we find a good deal of the red land. North of Farmerville this land does not extend. Between Farmerville and Trenton, in Ouachita, we find for five miles from the former place the same high, rough, red, and rocky country, and so exceedingly broken as to be but little cultivated; thence southward towards Downsville, and Forksville, and Trenton the country gradually becomes less broken and better adapted to farming purposes.

All along the Ouachita is a wide overflowed bottom, six miles in width near the northeast corner of Union, and diminishing until we reach Ouachita City, opposite the mouth of Bayou Bartholomew, where the hills abut against the river. This bottom is not at present susceptible of cultivation, but might probably be made so by a system of levees. The high lands again strike the river at Port Union, and there bear southwest, leaving a wide bottom at the mouth of D'Arbonne. South of D'Arbonne, the hills encroach on the bottom lands, and come very near to the river at Trenton.

The forest growth all through Union and the northern part of Ouachita, is a mixture of oaks, pines, dogwood, sassafras, persimmons, chinquapins, etc., on the high lands; with sweet and black gums, water oaks, beeches, ashes, maples and elms on the bottoms. Muscadine and fox grapes flourish all through North Louisiana. Just east of the town of Trenton, I observed a few of the long leaf pines. This is the most northern point at which I have discovered this variety of pine. On the western tier of parishes, the long leaf pines disappeared before I reached the parallel of Manny, in Sabine parish. This latter point is about one degree further South than Trenton.

Farmerville, the courthouse town of Union, is a small village, on a high ridge of the red lands, containing some two hundred inhabitants, with nothing of interest to mention concerning it. Like Claiborne, Union parish has a number of small villages scattered over its surface, as Marion, Shiloh, Ouachita City, Port Union and Downsville. The population of the parish is 11,699. Its productions are cotton, corn and the small grains. Apples and pears and peaches all do well in Union and all the northern parishes of the State. The



area of improved land of Union is eighty-two thousand seven hundred and ninety-one acres.

In my first report I ventured to make a classification of the parishes of the State into four divisions, with reference to their characteristic topographical features, namely: the "Hill Parishes," the "Alluvial Parishes," the "Bluff Parishés," and the "Pine Flat Parishes." As a result of my last year's work, I am convinced the above classification is too general in some respects and wanting in accuracy in others. The "Hill Parishes" may be very appropriately subdivided into "Good Upland Parishes" and the "Pine Hill Parishes." The line of demarcation between the good upland and the pine hills will not of course respect the boundaries of parishes, but when I have fully determined that line, I believe it will be found to start near Trenton, in Ouachita parish, and sweeping in a curve convex northward, to terminate at the Sabine river, a little south of Manny, in Sabine parish. It will be the especial object of a future survey to trace out accurately this line. All north of this line will be a good upland region, with a mixed growth of short leaf pines, oaks, hickories, dogwoods, ashes and other trees repuiring a good soil. South of it the hills will be strongly characterized by the long leaf pine. To determine with exactness the southern limit of the long leaf pine belt will also be made a special object at some future day.

I think it will also be better to make two divisions of the alluvial parishes, and call those where the sea marsh occurs in such extensive areas the "Marsh Parishes." It is true that the best lands of these parishes are purely alluvial and border the numerous bayous which flow through them, but their great characteristic feature is undoubtedly the sea marsh.

The term "Bluff Parishes" had better be changed into "Bluff Regions," as the peculiar soil and surface configurations of the bluff formation occurs in comparatively narrow belts on both sides of the Mississippi river, and can hardly be called a distinctive feature of more than three parishes east of the river.

A new subdivision should certainly be made to comprehend the beautiful prairie country west of the Teche; this I shall, therefore, call the "Prairie Region."

The "Pine Flats" of Calcasieu forming but a small part of that extensive parish, I shall not allow them to influence me in giving it a general designation.

Of the "parishes thus far examined by me I shall hazard the following classification, promising at the same time that subsequent investigations may make considerable changes.

"GOOD UPLAND PARISHES."

Morehouse, partly, Union, Ouachita, partly, Jackson, partly, Claiborne, Bossier, Bienville, partly, Caddo and De Soto.

"PINE HILL PARISHES."

Caldwell, Catahoula, Winn, Grant, Rapides, Natchitoches, Sabine and Calcasieu.

"ALLUVIAL PARISHES."

West Baton Rouge, Pointe Coupée, Iberville, Ascension, Assumption, and of course a number of others that I have not yet examined.

"THE BLUFF REGIONS"

Are found in the two Felicianas, East Baton Rouge, St. Mary, Iberia, Lafayette, St. Landry, possibly in Avoyelles, on Sicily Island and I presume will be found in Franklin as well as Richland and Carroll along Bayou Maçon.

"THE MARSH PARISHES"

Are Cameron, Vermilion partly, St. Mary, Terrebonne, Lafourche interior, to which I may add Plaquemines and St. Bernard, although I have not visited the two last.

"THE PRAIRIE REGION"

Is the greater part of St. Landry, one-third of Calcasieu, nearly all of Lafayette, one-third of Vermilion, and a large part of both St. Martin and Iberia.

"THE PINE FLATS."

I have as yet examined this country in only Calcasieu and Livingston, but am informed that most of the parishes north of Lake Pontchartrain belong to this class, not entirely, but characteristically so.

Having thus by my past labors pretty well determined the approximate limits of the various areas into which the State may be topographically divided, my object shall be in future to fix the

boundaries of these areas as accurately as possible. Until this work of accuracy shall be performed, it is needless for me to begin the draughting of the map, which is the ultimate object of my survey. Any ordinary map of the State of Louisiana will be of great assistance to the reader in the perusal of the foregoing pages.

I would state that my note books contain a great many items of more detailed information, not incorporated in this report, such as the names of streams not named on published maps, the localities of villages, mills, bridges, ferries, etc.; the main roads, and all other objects that might be properly placed on a map. I have also made sketches of characteristic scenery in every part of my journeyings, which will form, I hope, an interesting addition to my final report.

In concluding this report, I beg leave to make the following remarks: I have traveled during my last reconnoissance through twenty-three parishes of this State, alone and unarmed, and have not been molested or interfered with in the slightest degree. On the contrary, I have everywhere been treated with great courtesy and kindness. I had intended to acknowledge my indebtedness to those gentlemen who had shown me kindness and rendered me assistance, but shall be compelled to forbear doing so from the great number of such persons. My acknowledgments would embrace a list of over a hundred citizens of Louisiana, of all classes, from the wealthy planters to the smallest farmers. In but one single instance did I experience any difficulty in getting accommodations, after a long day's ride. More than one-half of my proffers of compensation for food and lodgings were refused by the hospitable people of the country.

Enclosed you will find an account of my necessary expenses during this year's operations.

I am, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

SAMUEL H. LOCKETT,

Professor of Engineering, Louisiana State University.

Respectfully forwarded to the honorable Board of Supervisors.

D. F. BOYD, Superintendent.

